

REMARKS

Entry of this amendment and reconsideration of this application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

Claims 17-19 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over the combination of Hansen and Clifford. Claims 20-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hansen, Clifford and Bittner. Claim 23 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hansen, Clifford and Oei. Claims 24 and 25 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hansen, Clifford and Shaw. Applicants respectfully traverse each of these rejections.

Applicants reiterate that Hansen was published in 1975, roughly 30 years after Clifford was published. As such, it must be presumed that, Hansen, as one of skill in the art, would be aware of Clifford. Nonetheless, Hansen does not disclose the use of accelerators in general, and certainly, as the Examiner acknowledges, does not disclose nitroguanidine specifically, for use as an accelerator, or otherwise. It is respectfully submitted that this is because Hansen requires that certain conditions in the working bath and in the makeup are maintained, and, in that makeup, it is possible to add more free P_2O_5 in proportion to the total P_2O_5 than would correspond to the phosphating equilibrium in the working bath, without disadvantageously affecting the layer-forming properties of the bath." (See col. 1, lines 54-61). Hansen also mentions inclusion of NO_3 as a strongly acidic inorganic anion. Clifford discloses that presence of a nitrate with the accelerators that are the focus of his patent appears to give slightly further acceleration (see col. 2, lines 37-38), yet Hansen does not suggest the use of an accelerator according to Clifford.

Furthermore, Hansen does mention that other additives may be added (see col. 2, lines 54-Col. 3, line 7), it is the Mn, P_2O_5 and NO_3 concentrations that are critical to the makeup of the bath. Maintenance of the free P_2O_5 ; total P_2O_5 is a necessary part of Hansen's invention. Given Hansen's restrictions on the contents of his bath solution, it is not believed that one of skill in the art would be compelled to modify a bath of Hansen by adding an accelerator such as disclosed by Clifford some 30 years earlier.

Neither of the other cited references overcomes the deficiencies of the combination of Hansen and Clifford.

Therefore, all rejections must be withdrawn.

Allowance is respectfully requested.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed to our Deposit Account No. 50-0624 under Order No. CHEMMT-206.1-US.

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Respectfully submitted,

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